

**WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:**

1. A method for treating pain comprising administering to a subject in need of pain relief a medicinal ointment comprising 1% to 90% by weight an active kavalactone selected from the group consisting of dihydrokawain, dihydromethysticin, kawain, and a combination thereof; and a medicinally acceptable carrier.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein the active kavalactone is dihydrokawain.
3. The method of claim 1, wherein the active kavalactone is dihydromethysticin.
4. The method of claim 1, wherein the active kavalactone is a combination of dihydromethysticin, dihydrokawain, and kawain.
5. The method of claim 1, wherein the ointment comprises 1.5% to 30% by weight an active kavalactone selected from the group consisting of dihydrokawain, dihydromethysticin, kawain, and a combination thereof; and a medicinally acceptable carrier.
6. The method of claim 5, wherein the active kavalactone is dihydrokawain.
7. The method of claim 5, wherein the active kavalactone is dihydromethysticin.
8. The method of claim 5, wherein the active kavalactone is a combination of dihydromethysticin, dihydrokawain, and kawain.
9. The method of claim 1, wherein the ointment comprises 2% to 25% by weight an active kavalactone selected from the group consisting of dihydrokawain, dihydromethysticin, kawain, and a combination thereof; and a medicinally acceptable carrier.
10. The method of claim 9, wherein the active kavalactone is dihydrokawain.
11. The method of claim 9 wherein the active kavalactone is dihydromethysticin.

12. The method of claim 9, wherein the active kavalactone is a combination of dihydromethysticin, dihydrokawain, and kawain.

5 13. A method for treating pain comprising administering to a subject in need of pain relief a patch comprising a material layer and a composition associated with the material layer; the composition having 1% to 90% by weight an active kavalactone selected from the group consisting of dihydrokawain, dihydromethysticin, kawain, and a combination thereof, associated with the material layer.

10 14. The method of claim 13, further comprising a protective layer intimately adhered to one side of the material layer which is resistant to passage of the active kavalactone.

15 15. The method of claim 14, wherein the material layer includes a pressure-sensitive adhesive.

16. The method of claim 15, wherein the active kavalactone is dihydrokawain.

17. The method of claim 15, wherein the active kavalactone is dihydromethysticin.

20 18. The method of claim 15, wherein the active kavalactone is a combination of dihydromethysticin, dihydrokawain, and kawain.

25 19. The method h of claim 15, wherein the adhesive layer includes 1.5% to 30% by weight an active kavalactone selected from the group consisting of dihydrokawain, dihydromethysticin, kawain, and a combination thereof; and a medicinally acceptable carrier.

30 20. The method of claim 19, wherein the active kavalactone is dihydrokawain.

21. The method of claim 19, wherein the active kavalactone is dihydromethysticin.

22. The method of claim 19, wherein the active kavalactone is a combination of dihydromethysticin, dihydrokawain, and kawain.

5 23. The method of claim 15, wherein the adhesive layer includes 2% to 25% by weight an active kavalactone selected from the group consisting of dihydrokawain, dihydromethysticin, kawain, and a combination thereof; and a medicinally acceptable carrier.

10 24. The method h of claim 23, wherein the active kavalactone is dihydrokawain.

25. The method of claim 23, wherein the active kavalactone is dihydromethysticin.

15 26. The method of claim 23, wherein the active kavalactone is a combination of dihydromethysticin, dihydrokawain, and kawain.

27. The method of for treating pain comprising administering to a subject in need of pain relief a medicinal ointment comprising 1% to 90% by weight an active kavalactone selected from the group consisting of desmethoxyyangonin, dihydrokawain, dihydromethysticin, kawain, methysticin, and yangonin, and a combination thereof; and a medicinally acceptable carrier.

28. The method of claim 1, wherein the pain is myofascial pain.

29. The method of claim 1, wherein the pain is hyperalgesia.

30. The method of claim 1, wherein the pain is preemptive analgesia.

31. The method of claim 1, wherein the pain is osteoarthritis pain.

32. The method of claim 1, wherein the pain is inflammatory pain.
33. The method of claim 1, wherein the pain is neuropathic pain
34. The method of claim 1, wherein the medicinal ointment further comprises petrolatum, beeswax, vegetable oil, or combination thereof.
35. The method of claim 1, wherein the medicinal ointment is essentially devoid of para-aminobenzoic acid.